Lee McClure

December 2025

Developing the music of Gershwin, Ravel, Weill, Copland and contemporary Jazz, Lee McClure is one of the most melodic composers in the last 50 years of classical music. His lyricism is distinguished by unexpected turns of traditional harmony and undercurrents of searching.

JoAnn Falletta, conductor of the Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra, has written about Lee's music:
Symphony No. 1 *"I found it to be a really beautiful work! I look forward to studying it"* (2015).
Film Noir Memoir, *"What a stunning work! And you had two great players to bring it to life. Amazing horn! Congratulations on a beautiful piece."* (2022) (performed by Jennifer Montone, 1st horn of the Philadelphia Orchestra)
String Quartet No. 1 *What a great piece! I loved the "scenes"- very evocative of my city! It is an excellent and very fun work. Warmest bravos. (*2024) (performed by ETHEL at Composers Concordance concert)

In March 2023 Lee won the composition competition "Generations XII" hosted by Composers Concordance who performed Lee's winning composition, *Pocket Suite No. 1* which is jazz preludes for classical piano. The sixth McClure work the group has performed is *Suite No.2 From The Voyage* for two pianists in Dec. 2025.

Now 78 Lee was the first champion of new melodic music during the 1980s when concerts of new music were dominated by atonal strident dissonances. In 1985 he founded the Eclectix Chamber Orchestra that has presented the music of more than 130 living composers. ***The New York Times*** has written: *"Ecelctix, a group dedicated to presenting melodic music in the tradition of Debussy, Gershwin, and Ellington performs in New York"* (1989). *"Most of this repertory grew out of a tonal, melody-accompaniment tradition, and a lot of it by way of American popular culture"* (1988). Watch the Youtube: *From The Eclectix Stage* to hear 18 recordings from 1986 to 2001.

The six album box set "Lee McClure Collected Works" became available in 2020 on BandCamp.
A concise and expandable list of Lee's works is available at All Works, with Links.

Lee's classical compositions include 2 operas, symphonic, modern-dance, choral and chamber works. Premiered at the Cathedral of Saint John the Divine (NYC) the first of his two operas with librettos by the Pulitzer-Prize-nominated playwright Ron Whyte was *Mother And Child*. The Gregg Smith Singers premiered Lee's *Litany to the Holy Spirit*. One of Lee's major dance scores is *Suite From The Voyage* for two pianos. His orchestral piece *Hiatus* was reviewed by Tim Page in ***The New York Times***: *"It was probably the most distinguished piece on the program: the harmonies had bite and the musical ideas seemed both organic and Mr. McClure's own"* (1986).

Played on 40 radio stations in the United States, Lee's CD, *A Jazz Christmas Like You've Never Heard* was reviewed in ***O's Place Jazz Magazine***: *"This is not your traditional Holiday album. For sure Lee has managed to transform, twist and provoke our imaginations with this work. It is truly a unique approach, the music is great and the lyrics are familiar"* (2009).

For his self-designed electric flute Lee has composed and performed an extensive repertoire since 1990. Playing a traditional silver flute into a microphone, he routs the sound through 12 processors and a sampler. In 2007 Lee founded the Eclectix Dance Company for which he created music on electric flute and conceived scenarios, choreography, lighting & costume design. His major works for electric flute include *Rock Adagio*, *Lonely Woman New Orleans After Katrina*, *Metamorphosis*, *Burnt Siena*, and *Through A Glass Darkly.*

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Brief History of the Eclectix Chamber Orchestra

December 2021

In 1985 Lee McClure founded the Eclectix Chamber Orchestra to provide a stage for living composers writing melodic and tonal music for orchestra and chamber ensembles. Of the 130 composers presented, 75% have composed new classical music and 25% performed new jazz compositions. The New York Times has written:

"Devoted to Melody: Eclectix, a group dedicated to presenting melodic music in the tradition of Debussy, Gershwin, and Ellington performs in New York" (1989).

"Most of this repertory grew out of a tonal, melody-accompaniment tradition, and a lot of it by way of American popular culture" (1988).

Based in New York City the primary stage for Eclectix before 2002 was CAMI Hall at 165 West 57th St, Manhattan.

To encourage the creation of melodic music, Eclectix launched the Erik Satie Mostly Tonal Award, an international composition competition. Winning compositions were performed on Eclectix concerts and included the 1989 premier of the song, "Now" by the renowned Earl Robinson.

Premieres of classical works by notable composers include those of Ron Carter, Toni & Gordon Parks, Dick Hyman, Meyer Kupferman and Coleridge-Taylor Perkinson.

Eclectix has presented well known jazz groups led by Dick Hyman, Fred Hersch, Bill Charlap, Jane Ira Bloom and Jeremy Steig.

Ensembles that appeared on Eclectix concerts have been the Saturday Brass Ensemble, the Paramount Brass Ensemble and *a cappella* groups: the Gregg Smith Singers, Elixir, and Margaret Dorn's The Accidentals.

From The Eclectix Stage is a collection of 18 recordings of Eclectix performances from 1985 to 2001. In this 1986 *video* the Eclectix orchestra performs Lee McClure's "Hiatus".

Opera and musical theatre presentations have included an opera-ballet by Peter Kelsh, an operetta by Kathleen St.John, a musical by Michael Dutka and a Lee McClure opera with Ron Whyte libretto premiered at the Cathedral of St. John the Divine, NYC.

Ballet and modern dance on Eclectix concerts have included ten choreographer-dancers performing premieres with new music.

In 2007 Lee founded the *Eclectix Dance Company* for which he created all the music on electric flute and conceived scenarios, choreography, lighting and costume design. This *video* is an excerpt of *Lonely Woman: New Orleans After Katrina.*

Most recently from 2016 to 2019 Eclectix has coproduced jazz concerts curated by Roger Blanc that have featured Billy Harper and Dave Liebman at the Zinc Bar in Greenwich Village, NYC

Eclectix Chamber Orchestra Inc. is a nonprofit 501(c)3 corporation.

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